CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. A method for converting a list of data items into an abbreviated list for transmission through a wireless network, comprising:

alphabetizing the list of data items based on at least a first letter in each data item;

separating the data list into a plurality of sets; and

generating a first abbreviated list having a maximum number of entries, each entry representing at least one set.

2. The method of claim 1, further comprising:

generating at least a second abbreviated list based on the members of at least one of the entries of the first abbreviated list wherein each entry in the second abbreviated list represents at least one set represented by the at least one entry of the first abbreviated list.

3. The method of claim 1 wherein each set represents the data items beginning with at least a same first letter.

4. The method of claim 1 wherein said step of alphabetizing comprises alphabetizing the list based on at least said first letter and a second letter.

5. The method of claim 1 further including the step of:

mapping each entry of said abbreviated list to a control input in a display device.

6. The method of claim 5 wherein said step of mapping comprises mapping each entry of said list to a keypad on a telephone.

7. The method of claim 1 wherein said method includes the steps of:

determining whether the list has a size greater than a predetermined maximum size; and

if said data list is greater than said predetermined maximum size, alphabetizing based on at least a next sequential letter in each said data item.

8. The method of claim 7 wherein said steps are repeated.

9. The method of claim 1 wherein said maximum number of entries is defined by:

determining a predetermined maximum number of entries;

dividing the number of entries in the first abbreviated list by said predetermined maximum; and

generating the list such that each entry in the first abbreviated list has a number of entries equal to the number of entries in the list divided by said maximum with a remainder of no more than one.

10. The method of claim 1 wherein said first abbreviated list has a number of entries greater than the number of lines in a display of a device, and the abbreviated list is divided into at least two pages for display on the device.

11. A method for presenting a list of alpha-character data, comprising:

alphabetizing the list of alpha-character data into at least one set of items containing items having at least the same first character;

determining whether said alphabetized list exceeds a maximum list length, and if so, grouping multiple sets together based on said maximum list length; and

mapping ones of said sets to an input controller.

12. The method of claim 11, further comprising the step of:

displaying at least one set responsive to a selection of an input controller for said set.

13. The method of claim 11 wherein said step of mapping comprises mapping multiple ones of said sets to one input controller.

14. The method of claim 13 wherein said method further comprises displaying a list of items beginning with each of said same first characters

corresponding to said multiple ones of said sets mapped to said one input controller.

15. The method of claim 14 wherein said displaying list of items comprises said first of said same first letters if the items in the set corresponding to each said characters exceeds said maximum list length.

16. The method of claim 14 wherein said displaying said list of items comprises displaying the items in said multiple ones of said sets mapped to said one input controller if said items total a number less than said maximum list length.

17. The method of claim 11 wherein said step of alphabetizing comprises alphabetizing the list based on at least said first letter and a second letter.

18. The method of claim 11 wherein said step of mapping comprises mapping each entry on said list to a keypad on a telephone.

19. The method of claim 11 wherein said method includes the steps of:

determining whether the list has a size greater than the predetermined maximum size; and

if said list is greater than said predetermined maximum size,

alphabetizing based on at least a next sequential letter in each said data item.

20. The method of claim 11 wherein said list of alpha-character data has a number of entries greater than the number of lines in a display of a device, and the alpha-character data list is divided into at least two pages for display on the device.

21. A method for converting a list of data, each entry in said list having at least one alpha-numeric character, comprising:

sorting said list of data based on a first of said alpha-numeric characters in each said entry in said list of data;

grouping entries into a plurality of sets, each set comprising entries in said list of data having at least a common first character;

generating an abbreviated list of said common first characters; and

linking each entry in said abbreviated list to the corresponding set of entries having said at least said common first character.

22. The method of claim 21, further comprising:

generating at least a second abbreviated list based on the members of the set wherein each entry in the second abbreviated list is a first letter in said abbreviated list and represents a second set of all entries in the data list beginning with one letter.

23. The method of claim 21 wherein said step of alphabetizing comprises alphabetizing the list based on at least said first letter each next sequential letter.

24. The method of claim 21 further including the step of:

mapping each entry of said abbreviated list to at least one input controller.

25. The method of claim 24 wherein said method further comprises displaying a list of items beginning with each of said same first characters corresponding to said multiple ones of said sets mapped to said one input controller.

26. The method of claim 25 wherein said displaying list of items comprises said first of said same first letters if the items in the set corresponding to each said characters exceeds said maximum list length.

27. The method of claim 24 wherein said step of mapping comprises mapping each entry on said list to a keypad on a telephone.

28. The method of claim 21 wherein said method includes the steps of:

determining whether the list has a size greater than a predetermined

maximum size; and

if said list is greater than said predetermined maximum size, alphabetizing based on at least a next sequential letter in each said data item.